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to conduct the submarine warfare in accordance with the general principles of visit and search, and the destruction of merchant vessels recognized by international law. She made the further concession of adapting methods of submarine war to the interests of neutrals. But the following statement in this German note, and quoted by the President in his address to the Congress, cannot with justice be taken from the context and made to stand alone. The familiar words are:

"In accordance with the general principles of visit and search and the destruction of merchant vessels, recognized by international law, such vessels, both within and without the area declared a naval war zone, shall not be sunk without warning and without saving human lives unless the ship attempt to escape or offer resistance."

Following this statement, it should be noted, the German Government proceeded in the same note to make certain qualifications as, for example:

"Should steps taken by the Government of the United States not attain the object it desires, to have the laws of humanity followed by all belligerent nations, the German Government would then be facing a new situation, in which it must reserve to itself complete liberty of decision."

Our simple point is that it is a matter of duty to adjudicate the present situation upon the facts. As we understand it, Germany is attempting at the present time to create a restricted blockade zone around her enemies, with a lane of safety for innocent neutral commerce. The difference between Germany's behavior and England's, for example, is that she is establishing her blockade by means of submarines, which involves danger to life as well as to property. This situation is bad enough, no doubt, and may soon lead to an intolerable condition; but it seems to us that the candid interpretation of the facts should be thrown into the scale in favor of peace along with such substantial modifications as the German Government may yet be led to make in its program. An impromptu conference of the diplomatic representatives of the neutral powers in Washington, with a view to making suggestions to the German Government relative to concessions, is not an unreasonable method of procedure.

Our personal view is that neutral ships might well remain unarmed. Merchant ships free of contraband should be absolutely inviolate. Ships carrying contraband may be captured or destroyed, but only after the safety of those on board has been secured. It is a matter of international duty that there should be no restrictions on the number of neutral ships. Neither should there be any distinction between freighters and passenger ships. We see no objections to convenient lanes of safety through blockaded zones, so long as the zones are really

blockaded. We believe that neutral ships should be plainly marked in such a way that they can be readily distinguished. We are willing to go farther and agree that the locations of the lanes of safety and the character of the markings shall be determined by agreement between the belligerent and neutral powers.

Enemy ships, unarmed and carrying no contraband, may be captured or destroyed only after the safety of those on board has been secured; but, of course, all armed enemy ships and all ships carrying munitions of war have a military status.

We do not profess to be military experts. We do not believe that there can be any law of war. But war is today a tremendous fact. Our hope is that by the application of proper patience and wisdom we may interpret our duty in the light of justice.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

ARE we also to be dragooned at the last into this war? Are we going to ignore our duty to keep our own heads at all hazards? Are we going to accept a crazy challenge to join in a worse than savage duel threatening the very life of Europe? Are we to forget our traditional loathing of the carnivorous demon of war? Must we, too, return to the lawless state of tooth and claw, and join the wild menagerie of killers? Shall we, like those others, subscribe to the faith that blowing the brains out of unoffending boys is the only means of achieving that justice for which states exist? Must we send our lads to the trenches of Europe, to wallow there in blood, because of a situation which we did nothing to create? Shall we dampen so soon our enthusiasm for President Wilson's attempt to "speak for the silent mass of mankind"? Are we to enter "entangling alliances" and "competitions of power," to get caught in "a net of intrigue and selfish rivalry," and to disturb our own affairs with "influence intruded from without," against all of which President Wilson so eloquently set himself in his great address to the Senate but a few days ago?

Let us dare to hope and to believe that these things need not be. The President himself refuses to believe that Germany will ignore the ancient friendship between her people and our own. We can do no less. The President is thinking only of protecting our seamen and our people in the prosecution of their peaceful and legitimate errands on the high seas. This is not war. Germany wishes no war with this country. We wish no war with Germany. There has been no threat of war from either side. Under such circumstances it ought not to be impossible to avert war. The prayer from the heart of every American of good will is that there may be no such war.

The hour is fateful. But if we remember our imme-

morial faiths in reason rather than passion, in justice rather than might, in ordered processes rather than mobbed lawlessness, we can support whole-heartedly all that the President thus far has stood for in this special crisis, and still escape the wicked wastes of war.

February 7, 1917.

ON KEEPING OUR MOUTHS SHUT

MR. CHAMP CLARK expressed to a small group recently the view that: "In my judgment now is a mighty good time for everybody to keep his mouth shut." Such homely advice is decidedly pertinent, especially for those "red-blooded persons" theoretically attracted toward the glories of war. The other day Congressman Callaway, of Texas, introduced into the *Congressional Record* a statement, which statement, so far as we know, has not been challenged, to the effect that the J. P. Morgan interests, the steel, shipbuilding, and powder interests, and their subsidiary organizations, got together in March, 1915, twelve men high up in the newspaper world and employed them to select the most influential newspapers in the United States to control, so far as possible, the policy of the daily press of the United States. With circumstantial detail adding conviction to the words, we are told that emissaries were sent to purchase the policy, national and international, of twenty-five papers. An agreement was reached, the policy of the papers was bought to be paid for by the month, an editor was furnished for each paper properly to supervise and edit information regarding the questions of preparedness, militarism, financial policies, and other things of national and international nature considered vital to the interests of the purchasers. This contract, we are told, is in existence at the present time, and this is the reason why the news columns of the daily press of the country are filled with all sorts of military arguments and misrepresentations. The policy includes the suppression of everything in opposition to the interests served. Public sentiment has been commercialized, and it has been attempted to sandbag the National Congress with fear and false pretenses. Under the guise of "patriotism," these high-minded persons are playing on every prejudice and passion of the American people.

Under such circumstances "rumors of war" spread easily and effectively. We had plenty of false reports, for example, about the *Housatonic*, and about the *California*. The *Philadelphia*, now known safely to have arrived in port, was reported sunk, a report which spread like wildfire across the country and promoted the possibilities of war. Congressman Moore, of Pennsylvania, feels that most of these false reports come from London, where there seems to be centered an intense desire to tell us about German outrages. In spite of the fact that this great Republic is on the very brink of war, newspapers

fearlessly displayed in headlines: "Death of an American on the wrecked *Turino*; an American negro fireman, George Washington by name, killed." This negro is now known to have been an English citizen.

It would seem that a rational people, and that a patriotic press, especially in these dangerous days, would wish to confine themselves to the exact facts, and only the exact facts. There are some people in this country to whom Speaker Clark's advice decidedly applies, and that is to the editors of the American press. Mr. Moore, speaking in the House, February 9, elaborating this point, said:

"I think it would be better for some of the editors to 'shut up' when they do not know what they are talking about. (Applause.) I think it would be better for some of these professional patriots who have determined our international relations in advance, and who insist upon adjusting our diplomatic affairs in this crisis, not only to 'shut up,' but to go tie a rope around their necks, attach an anchor to it, and jump into the sea. We could better afford to dispense with their meddlesome services than to plunge the people of this country into a foreign war. I think it would be far better for this country." (Applause.)

When Abraham Lincoln was a Member of the House of Representatives, he observed, with respect to our Mexican complications, on January 12, 1848:

"When the war began it was my opinion that all those who, because of knowing too little, or because of knowing too much, could not conscientiously approve the conduct of the President (in the beginning of it) should, nevertheless, as good citizens and patriots, remain silent on that point, at least until the war should be ended."

Our personal opinion is that the people who are today crying loudest in this country for war either know too little or know too much, and that now is a most excellent time for them to "shut up."

EDWARD A. FILENE is said to have reported to the United States Chamber of Commerce that the Chamber's referendum to the business men of the country showed them all to be overwhelmingly in favor of the program of the League to Enforce Peace, with the exception of that plank which advocates the employment of military and naval force to secure arbitration. Which reminds us of the man who had the finest hen in Cashmere County, the only discernible fault with her being that she wouldn't lay eggs and was not a good setter.

To QUOTE from the celebrated address of January 22, 1917: "There can be no sense of safety and equality among the nations if great, preponderating armies are henceforth to continue here and there to be built up and maintained." And what of great, preponderating navies, such as we may hope for, with, so far, the two greatest naval appropriation bills in history?